

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE
DISTRICT OF VERMONT

U.S. DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF VERMONT
FILED

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MEGAN THOMPSON,

Plaintiff,

v.

STRYKER EMPLOYMENT COMPANY,
LLC,

Defendant.

Case No. 2:23-cv-2

ORDER

On May 26, 2024, defendant Stryker Employment Company, LLC (“Stryker”) filed a motion to enforce settlement. (Doc. 40.) On July 15, 2024, plaintiff Megan Thompson, representing herself, filed a motion for status conference in which she raised complaints against her former attorney Norman Watts and stated that she had reached more favorable terms with Stryker and agreed to a new settlement on June 13, 2024. (Doc. 52.) Plaintiff took issue with the new settlement agreement and sought new counsel to review its terms. The court held a status conference on July 23, 2024, at which the parties stated that they had reached a new agreement. The court proposed that the 1/3 contingency fee sought by attorney Watts be held in escrow and the balance of the new settlement be turned over to Plaintiff in accord with the parties’ settlement agreement. The court ordered Plaintiff to file a response to the pending motions to enforce settlement as well as those related to Mr. Watt’s status by August 1, 2024. (Doc. 56.)

In early August, Plaintiff filed several responses to the pending motions. (Doc. 61.) She opposed enforcement of the original settlement agreement negotiated by attorney Watts. By order dated August 9, 2024, the court granted attorney Watts’ motion to intervene and to

withdraw as attorney. The court requested a statement from Plaintiff within 10 days as to whether she seeks to withdraw from the later settlement with Stryker and resume litigation of the merits of the dispute or litigate the fee dispute issue only. (Doc. 63.) Plaintiff responded on August 19, 2024, with a statement that “Plaintiff feels compelled to accept the June settlement terms proposed by Stryker,” reserving her objections to attorney Watts’s claim for legal fees and expenses. (Doc. 64.) On September 20, 2024, the court entered an order seeking a clear statement from Plaintiff about whether she wishes to settle with Stryker on the terms proposed. (Doc. 67.) Plaintiff has not responded to this request.

The court ORDERS as follows:

1. Within 10 days, Stryker shall file under seal the current draft of the parties’ settlement agreement.
2. Within 10 days thereafter, Plaintiff shall file a statement as to whether she accepts these terms, has changes to propose, or rejects the proposed settlement altogether. If there are proposed changes, these shall be filed with the court under seal.

The court strongly recommends that Plaintiff obtain new counsel. It is likely from the tone and style of her recent submissions that she is working with an attorney now. A notice of appearance would be a welcome development. Once the issue of settlement with Stryker is resolved, the court will hear from Plaintiff and from attorney Watts about their preferred method to resolve the fee dispute and bring this case to a conclusion.

SO ORDERED.

Dated at Burlington, in the District of Vermont, this 3rd day of October, 2024.

/s/ Geoffrey W. Crawford
District Judge
United States District Court